

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

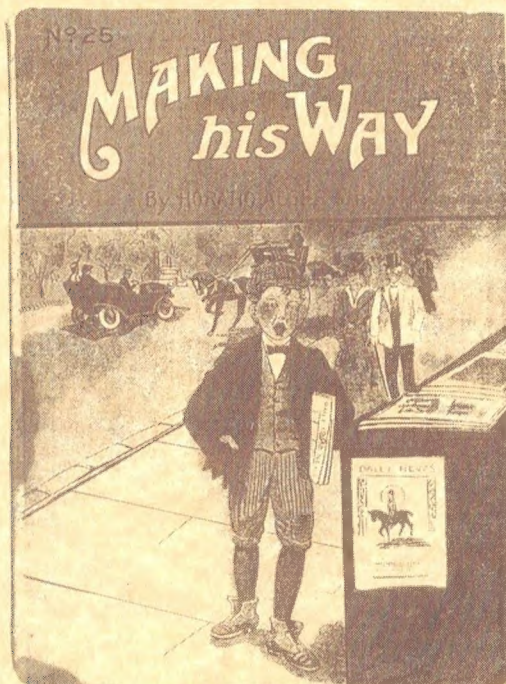
A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and study of old-time dime and nickel novels, popular story papers, series books, and pulp magazines

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October 1996

Whole No. 641

DIME NOVEL SKETCHES



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THE HITCHING POST

Apologia. In our haste to relay the news about the content and status of the Stratemeyer Syndicate records at the New York Public Library last time we committed a few errors. First of all, we went to press before receiving official sanction to do so and we wish to apologize. Secondly we continued to refer to the collection as the Stratemeyer Syndicate Archives when the official name is the Stratemeyer Syndicate Records. In fact, the complete title should read: **Stratemeyer Syndicate Records, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.** Once again, we wish to thank Mimi Bowling, Curator of Manuscripts, New York Public Library, for the courtesy extended the consultants and for permission to publish their reports.

Our regular features are back and we hope you enjoy the issue. In December we will look at some people whom Theodore Dreiser knew during his tenure at Street & Smith, revisit the *Boys Own Library*, and continue our survey of Prof. Bartok's scientific marvels.

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Dick Merriwell's Terrorflying Mystery

Edward and Karen Lauterbach
West Lafayette, IN

The following article belongs to the category of critical essays known as the Retrospective Review. As such it explores both plot and style in one of Gilbert Patten's more unusual stories in the Merriwell series.

Dick Merriwell at Montauk Point (*Tip Top Weekly*, No. 796, July 15, 1911) by Burt L. Standish (pseudonym of Gilbert Patten) entangles the younger of the Merriwell half-brothers in a fantastic mystery.¹ On a visit to the Sparkfair family at Montauk Point, Long Island, New Jersey, Dick Merriwell encounters a series of horrible events. With a frenzied scream, a horse plunges over a cliff to its death. A sheep, stabbed dead, falls from the sky. What appears to be a monstrous bird flies overhead. The body of a man, mutilated, lies on the beach. Then Dick finds traces of a prehistoric flying reptile that existed millions of years earlier. When Dick and his friends take an evening automobile ride, a living pterodactyl attacks.

Patten's style is clear and straightforward except for a few turn-of-the-century idioms. Though British-sounding phrases such as "chum," "chaps," "fellows," "deuce of a while," "By Jove," and "Bless my soul" (compare this with Mr. Wakefield Damon in the Tom Swift series, who blessed his soul and everything else) may have been used by upper-middle-class Americans early in this century, they seem old-fashioned today. Otherwise, Patten's writing is easier to read than the stilted language of many dime novels and early series books.

Patten's story is carefully constructed. In the opening chapter Dick goes fishing. This everyday activity, which is illustrated on the cover, gives no hint of the fantastic occurrences to follow. But by the end of Chapter Two, strange incidents begin to stand out against this background of ordinary happenings.

At first the menace is vague. When a horse plunges to its death, Dick Merriwell thinks he sees a big, broad shadow pass over the trees (5). As Dick's friends Brad Buckhart and Celia Sparkfair stroll along the beach, there is "a whirring rush through the air" and "a dark, silent mass flashed past. . ." (11). A groom and maid hear "a strange rustling, flapping sound" sweep overhead and see "the creature. . .glaring at them with two wide-open, lidless eyes which glowed like lamps" (15). To add to the tension, a strange, unpleasant smell

always accompanies the thing in the air.

But after Dick finds a giant footprint, the threat of the pterodactyl becomes specific: "A monstrous flying creature . . . armed with that sword-like beak, with strength enough to drive it through almost anything, and protected by an impenetrable scaly armor. . ." (19). The description of the pterodactyl attacking the Sparkfair car is vivid: "Its long, snaky neck waved slowly from side to side, and the hideous head, terminating in that long, murderous beak, seemed . . . as if seeking something" (25). What it seeks, of course, is Dick and his friends. Then, "Down swooped the monster . . . Swiftly he swept on them, the snaky neck straight and rigid now, and the terrible beak extended" (26). Patten could write well. Note the alliteration of all the *s* sounds in the last two quotations and the onomatopoeia of the words "swooped" and "swept." These literary devices reinforce the horror of the description.

Patten carefully builds suspense through the skillful use of misdirection. He subtitles his dime novel *The Terror of the Air*, and throughout slightly more than the first half of the story, it seems that the thing overhead is an airplane. (Like most writers of the early 1900s, Patten calls it an "aeroplane." He uses that term at least 19 times, varied by "airship" at least five times, "flying machine" three, and "aerial machine" once.) Despite the sound of wings, the strange smell and the glaring eyes, only after 16 pages does Dick question this possibility. He says, "'The flapping [sound] puzzles me. It's against every known principle of mechanical aerial locomotion. And there are the eyes. . .'" (16). But his doubts are immediately brushed aside. The glaring eyes are explained as battery-powered lamps on a plane (15), which does seem logical, since the headlights of the automobile Dick drives are movable acetylene lamps (25). This explanation indicates something about the level of technology in 1911.

After his very first encounter with the flying object, Dick says it was "Something like an aeroplane. . .'" (6). Dick and his friends think that the horse, being unused to planes, was frightened by one and ran over the cliff. From this point on, since the characters believe in the idea of a plane, so does the reader.

Fear of the unknown threat increases as Dick speculates about the strange plane. Maybe it is experimental and being tested in an isolated part of Montauk Point (6). Perhaps the pilot deliberately drove the horse over the cliff, though: "A human being possessed of the cold, calculating cruelty necessary to drive a helpless dumb creature to such a death, was capable of almost anything . . . his capability for harm was almost infinite" (7). And a hypothetical pilot who may have stabbed a sheep and dropped it from a plane is considered a "lunatic" (9),

a "madman" (11), and a "fiend" (15), "whose diabolical mind had conceived these futile, senseless killings . . ." (11). Dick suggests that the awful smell may come from "a new fluid motive power," or the pilot "'might be throwing over receptacles of some sort containing . . . gas,'" possibly poisonous (9). The plane is a very bright red herring which Patten uses as skillfully as any writer of mysteries to terrify and mislead his reader. The immediate acceptance of the presence of a plane shows how fast aviation had progressed after the Wrights' first manned flight in December, 1903. By 1911, they and Glenn Curtiss were manufacturing planes and selling them to both the government and private individuals. Furthermore, many an inventor designed and flew his own home-built plane.² Stories about extraordinary exploits by airmen often appeared in the daily newspapers. Aviation had become so common that a plane seemed to be the most logical explanation for the strange events at Montauk Point.

However, once Dick finds definite traces of the pterodactyl, everything changes. His discovery scene is nearly as dramatic as the ones where Robinson Crusoe chances on the bare footprint of Friday or Dr. Mortimer identifies the track of the Hound of the Baskervilles:

In the soft ooze bordering the pond was a foot-print. It was clear and distinct as if it had been made within the hour, but of such an extraordinary nature that Merriwell could not believe his senses . . . There were five toes, equipped with long, sharp claws; and so heavy had been the pressure exerted to make it, that the very texture of the rough, scaly skin was clear in the soft, smooth mud. But the incredible part of it was its enormous size. . . . (17)

It was the footprint of a gigantic pterodactyl!³

Though Dick Merriwell recalls having seen similar tracks in an exhibit of fossils, the footprint before him "had not been made millions of years ago. It had been made that day!" (17). At this point the story turns into a fine example of dime novel science fiction.⁴

Dick must track down the living pterodactyl. To do so, Patten has him turn to the methods of what Sherlock Holmes called the science of deduction. When Dick and his companions find the body of a dead man in the sand, Dick says they must not "'mess the sand up and destroy any traces . . .'" (21). Like Holmes in *A Study in Scarlet*, Dick is careful not to destroy telltale clues while trying to piece together a sequence of events, and, again like the great detective, he makes acerbic remarks about people trampling the evidence. Once Holmes had shown the way, other intelligent characters in popular fiction followed in his footsteps.⁵

Eventually, in the best Holmesian manner, the friends work out what has happened:

It was easy to reconstruct the tragic scene by the aid of these traces in the sand. The man had been walking toward the cottage, apparently in a slow, slouching way. His trail led along the beach in a wavering line as far as the eye could reach. Then suddenly he had stopped and turned around. The blurred, partly defaced prints showed that clearly. The next instant he started to run—swiftly, wildly. The footprints were far apart with the toes deeply indented and heels showing scarcely at all. A dozen steps he took, and that was all. (21)

As the description continues, Patten shifts to the historical present to enhance the dramatic effect:

Suddenly he hears a sound behind him and looks around. There, bearing down upon him with terrible speed, he sees this monster, wild, horrible, fantastic as any nightmare. He flees in terror-stricken haste. A brief, mad rush along the lonely sand, bright in the moonlight.

The pterodactylus . . . carries the limp body for some distance impaled on its fearful beak, before it is shaken off, to fall a huddled mass on the beach below. Then the creature itself swoops down, takes a little run along the beach, and launches into the air again. (21-22)

This horrible picture of the dead man's final moments serves to intensify the readers' sense of dread. Will Dick experience a similar fate when he finally confronts the pterodactyl?

The climax of *Montauk Point* is powerful. When their car breaks down, Dick Merriwell and his friends attempt to repair it. Suddenly the pterodactyl attacks. Dick urges the others to get under the car for protection, then armed only with a revolver, braces himself against the car and fires, but to no effect. He knows he must find a vulnerable target:

The protruding head leaped suddenly into the path of light, not thirty feet distant. Appallingly hideous as it was, Dick's heart leaped with joy. The eyes were there, wide open and staring in the light of the powerful lamps [the car's headlights]. He must hit them—he must! It was the only chance left now.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

Crash!

The monster struck the car with terrific impact, smashing the lamps and wind shield with a splintering of glass, and driving the whole heavy body back several feet in spite of the tightly locked brakes. (26)

No. 796

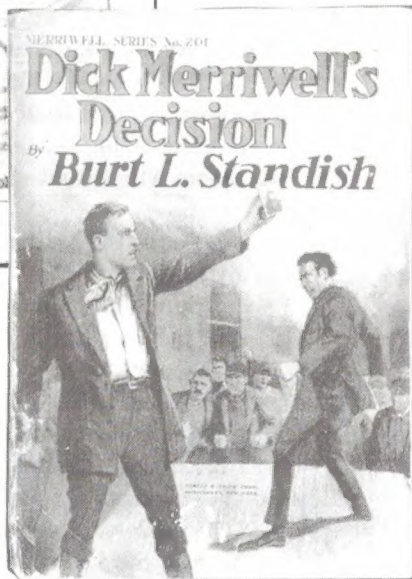
JULY 15, 1911

5 CENTS

TIP TOP WEEKLY

AN IDEAL PUBLICATION FOR THE AMERICAN YOUTH

Dick Merriwell At Montauk Point



This "terrifying" story first appeared in *Tip Top Weekly* in 1911 and was reprinted twice, in *New Medal Library* no. 770 (1914) and again in *Merriwell Series* no. 201 (1928). Look closely at the cover of *Tip Top* no. 796. Did artist R. Emmett Owen include a pterodactyl lurking in the trees? Let the reader decide!

Dick's skillful shot penetrates the pterodactyl's eye, wounding it mortally. It writhes on the ground, then falls into the sea. Dick Merriwell has saved his friends from death.

In this early example of science fiction in the dime novel, Patten writes clearly and manipulates the readers' attention skillfully to create suspense. His descriptions of finding the track of the pterodactyl and its vicious attacks from the sky are vivid. This use of a science fiction theme is somewhat unusual for a Merriwell story, since the brothers are usually involved in more mundane tales concerned with athletic prowess, the problems of school life, the foiling of various villainous activities, or adventures in interesting geographical settings.⁶ The motif of a battle with a living pterodactyl, a survivor from the prehistoric past, raises *Dick Merriwell at Montauk Point* to a level of interest above the usual Merriwell adventures.

NOTES

1. We wish to thank J. Randolph Cox for helping us obtain a copy of *Dick Merriwell at Montauk Point* and for checking some bibliographical information.
2. An example of a home-built plane occurs in James Otis, *The Aeroplane at Silver Fox Farm* (1911). See David K. Vaughan, "James Otis Kaler's Silver Fox Farm Series: Aviation Reaches the New England Coast," *Dime Novel Round-Up* 64 (August, 1995): 94-101, especially 94-96.
3. For another dramatic footprint discovery see James H. Foster, *The Forest of Mystery* (Akron, Ohio: Saalfeld, 1935). As boy protagonists Joe Lewis and Bob Holton explore Africa, they come upon traces of a what might be a white pigmy elephant:

"Look at that strange track," he [Bob] pointed out. "Was that made by a wild animal?"

"Search me," Joe said. "I never saw anything like it before. Looks like the footprint of a person, only it's much larger, and there aren't any toe marks . . . Let's get out of here. . . ." (231-21)

And in Leo Edwards, *Jerry Todd's Cuckoo Camp* (New York: Grosset, 1940), Red Meyers finds a giant human footprint beside a spring (98-99).
4. For a discussion of science fiction in dime novels and series books, see Edward T. LeBlanc, "Science Fiction in Dime Novels: A Bibliographic Review," *Dime Novel Round-Up* 57 (February, 1988): 2-7; and E. F. Bleiler, "From the Newark Steam Man to Tom Swift," *Extrapolation* 30 (Summer, 1989): 101-16.

5. Holmesian deductions are also made in Clarence Young, *The Motor Boys on the Wing* (1912), this time from the wheel tracks of an airplane used by robbers to land on and then escape from the roof of a bank. See Edward Lauterbach, "In the Tracks of the Great Detective," *Yellowback Library*, 20 (March-April, 1984): 4-5, which notes, too, how the progress of early aviation extended the opportunities for deduction in popular fiction.
6. For a discussion of Patten and the Merriwell stories, see John Levi Cutler, "Gilbert Patten and His Frank Merriwell Saga," *The Maine Bulletin* 36 (May, 1934): [1]-123. This early study has not been superseded by later critical work on Merriwell fiction. See also Edward T. LeBlanc, *Street & Smith Dime Novel Bibliography, Part II: The Merriwells*. Fall River, MA: Edward T. LeBlanc, 1990, the definitive Merriwell bibliography.
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JESSE JAMES AT NORTHFIELD: A FOLKLORISTIC STUDY

Joseph L. Mbele
St. Olaf College

While the following article does not deal with the Jesse James of the dime novels as such it does discuss an aspect of one of the basic elements in the Jesse James legend which appears in many of the stories about the outlaw. The Great Northfield Bank Raid is found in stories in both Westbrook's *Adventure Series* and Tousey's *Wide Awake Library*, but neither Street & Smith's *Log Cabin Library* nor *Jesse James Stories* includes the event as the focus of an entire story.

Every year, during the first week of September, the town of Northfield, in Southern Minnesota, commemorates what are called the Defeat of Jesse James Days. The highlights of the week are the dramatic reenactments of the ill-fated raid on the Northfield bank that marked the beginning of the end of the career of Jesse James, one of America's most notorious outlaws. No other occasion attracts as many thousands of people to Northfield. What is the significance of this annual ritual? I am interested in finding answers to this question.

I am using the name of Jesse James in this paper to represent a famous group of outlaws of whom Jesse James is perhaps the most well known. Much of the time I use the name Jesse James to represent both the individual and the gang.

There are many studies of Jesse James. Most of them seek to present the historical facts about him. This has been partly to stem the growth of the story of Jesse James into a legend. The writers have sought to correct the fictional, legendary, and untrue accretions that have become part of the Jesse James tradition. They have also sought to straighten out controversies and to tell the authentic story. Some of these works purporting to be true accounts have been written by relatives of Jesse, anxious to exonerate him.

I have also learned that these studies have dealt mostly with Jesse James' activities and exploits in other parts of the United States, notably Missouri, his home state. Not much has been written about Jesse James in Northfield, except as small sections in these studies. Again, the comments about Jesse James in Northfield have sought mainly to present the historical facts about the Northfield bank raid. The only significant study that takes Northfield as its focus is the 1895 book, *Robber and Hero*, by Huntington¹. This largely historical account of the bank raid, has been considered valuable precisely because it has presented the facts of what happened on that fateful day in 1876.

In the subsequent hundred years, there has not been another significant study of Jesse James's raid on Northfield. This is a serious omission, considering the importance of Jesse for Northfield, not to mention the importance of Northfield as Jesse's Waterloo. For folklorists, the problem is worse because we do not have any significant folkloristic study which would illuminate the influence of the Jesse James legend in Northfield and the outlying areas. Anyone who spends some time in Northfield will notice that the Jesse James legend is an integral part of the life of the town and its environs. The name of this outlaw seems to be everywhere. There is even a restaurant named after him. The September ritual is thus only the high-point of an ongoing legacy.

Since my arrival in Northfield in 1991, I have kept my eyes and ears open, trying to learn about the Jesse James tradition. As a folklorist, I am interested in the very material that the other writers find untrue or figments of the imagination. Folklorists regard this material as crucial for understanding people's real feelings and consciousness. Folklorists know that people are not moved by truths and facts alone, but also by rumors, legends, stereotypes, prejudices and superstitions. We often live our lives based on these untruths, often in defiance of truth and evidence.

In the summer of 1992, I received a grant from the Blandin Foundation to conduct research on the Jesse James tradition in Northfield. Assisted by two St. Olaf students, I interviewed people from Northfield and its environs and studied the records at the Northfield Historical Society and the libraries of the two Northfield colleges, St. Olaf and Carleton. Having done folklore field work in Tanzania, Kenya, and Finland, I was particularly interested in the interviews. I wanted to find out if there were oral versions of the Jesse James tradition that were different from the written accounts. I was also interested in finding out if there was a Northfield version of the Jesse James tradition that was different from the traditions of other parts of the United States. During the reenactments of the raid in Northfield, one gets the distinct impression that the Northfield officials want to stress that the reenactments are meant to celebrate the heroism of the bank clerk and the people of Northfield who foiled the gang. Yet, I was curious to see how the general population felt.

As we interviewed people, we soon realized that their primary concern was to give us accurate accounts of what happened. Some people were hesitant to talk to us on the grounds that they were not knowledgeable enough. They would rather we talked to the experts. Some of the people we interviewed kept referring to their books to cross-check facts, or, if they did not have books, they became quite upset if they forgot a relevant fact, such as a date or a name.

In the course of my research on folklore in various communities in Kenya and Tanzania, I have encountered this anxiety about expertise. Again and again, people have confessed to me that they know little or nothing, and they have mentioned the experts I should consult.

I have also noticed that, coming as we do from academic settings to do folklore fieldwork among the general population, we are perceived as academics, people concerned with facts and the truth. Our informants may wonder why we should be interested in mere stories which are not factual. The challenge for the folklorist is to explain to those people the importance of the untrue accounts.

In the case of my research in Northfield, I think there was another factor involved. The people we interviewed were mostly of the middle class, with considerable formal education. They had read books and newspapers all their lives, and it was immediately clear that they remembered what they had read, and that is what they told us. They were not part of what one might call an oral culture, such as one might find in parts of Africa, Asia or elsewhere. Some had travelled to places such as Missouri, the birthplace of Jesse James, to do research on Jesse James. In a sense, my research in Northfield was not the kind of folklore research I had been used to. I believe, however, that with time, if the people get to know us more, they might feel more at ease with us and share with us anecdotes and other elements of the Jesse James tradition that are not part of the written record.

There is, nevertheless, the fact that in a situation such as that of Northfield, the boundary between the written record and folklore is blurred, because the folklore often finds its way into the written record. By paying close attention to what people were saying, by studying the written records, and by relying on comparative folkloristics, it has been possible to make some tentative folkloristic statement about the Jesse James tradition in Northfield. This is the substance of the following discussion.

The people of Northfield have domesticated the Jesse James tradition and made it serve and project their local interests. Presenting Jesse James as the villain—whereas he is a hero in some parts of the U.S.A.—they have made Joseph Lee Heywood the hero. Heywood, the bank clerk, resisted Jesse and his gang's demands for money and was instantly killed by the gang. The annual commemoration at Northfield involves a pilgrimage, so to speak, to the grave of Heywood, as part of the effort to remember him and salute his heroism. The ritual pilgrimage to a hero's grave is common in epic traditions of the world.

I am fascinated by the possible psychological roots and significance of the Northfield Jesse James tradition, especially the annual reenactments of the raid.

Old time residents of Northfield have told me that towns and communities across America tend to feel that they must have some excuse for a celebration, and that, therefore, Northfield is no exception. All this is true, especially if we take into account the social function of rituals. Rituals are central in the life of every society. Rituals and the myths associated with them express collective aspirations and anxieties and also help to define and maintain group identity. It is quite proper to conceptualize the Northfield Jesse James tradition in terms of a myth-and-ritual pattern as defined by anthropologists. The narrative tradition is the myth, the ceremonies being the ritual.

I have been tempted to look farther, starting from the premise that even for the individual, the experience of being robbed is traumatic. The memory of such experiences never goes away and we tend to narrate such experiences as a way of projecting and sharing our anxieties. When we manage to foil the robber, the story acquires a different character; it becomes a heroic tale in which we celebrate our exploits. No wonder the Northfield episode has been described as the James gang's Waterloo². The *Northfield News* amplifies this comparison:

The story of the Northfield Raid in which a notorious gang of bandits led by Jesse James met their Waterloo, not at the hands of armed officers of the law, but of quiet, ordinary, peace-loving citizens of a little college town, has often been told ³.

The statement above is significant in yet another way. It highlights the heroism of Northfield by alluding to the numerous, but futile, efforts elsewhere in the USA by government and professional detectives to capture Jesse James.

With such a victory over the robber, the narrative acquires new psychological functions. Instead of just expressing our anxieties or our victories, it expresses our desire, our dream, to triumph over robbers; it becomes, in a manner of speaking, a vehicle of our wishful thinking. I think it is quite significant that the Northfield annual ritual is named "The Defeat of Jesse James Days." The emphasis on defeating the robber expresses a collective dream, as psychoanalytic theory might put it.

The Northfield bank raid was very traumatic for a relatively young pioneer town. For years after the raid, Northfielders lived with the rumors of a possible revenge raid on Northfield. For more than twenty years, some of the captured gang members were in jail in nearby Stillwater prison. By the turn of the century, when petitions were afoot to pardon the prisoners, Northfielders were bitterly opposed to the idea. The *Northfield News* published a statement which

noted:

The most conspicuous reason against the pardon of the Younger brothers by the people of this vicinity was the supposition that they would go south and be exhibited from the stage or museum as the great and onlys that accomplished the dirty deed which marks the pages of Northfield's history with the life blood of one of its best citizens.⁴

It appears that there was also a suggestion at the time for a play based on the raid, for the article goes on to state:

Such exhibition is not wholesome food for young minds. The name of Jesse James is synonymous (sic) with red handed murder and the people of Northfield who took part in the real drama some years ago do not want to see the deeds of this band lauded from the public stage in this city. The play should be suppressed by the State authorities as being unfit for the minds of our youth.

The people of this city have seen the real article and the play would be like shaking a red rag before an infuriated beast.⁵

Minnesotans' negative attitudes about the gang and the robbery were not lost to the 65-year-old daughter of gang member Frank James during her June 1941 visit to Southern Minnesota, touring sites connected with the gang's trail to Northfield. She took precautions lest she be recognized.⁶

Apparently, Missourians in general were wary of Northfield. A story in the *Northfield News* in 1902 states:

Some people coming up from Missouri have a great fear as their train stops at Northfield and they peek out of the car windows to see if every citizen here has a revolver in his belt or a knife up his sleeve. One Missourian mustered up courage enough to get out on the car platform the other day and ask if the men who captured the Youngers were still alive. Upon being informed that they were he hastened back into the car and seemed afraid of his life. He knew the Youngers were hard shooters and thought their captors must be even better with the use of fire arms. Even a conductor on the Rock Island insinuated to me the other day that the people here are pretty good marksmen. Well, Northfield is wide awake and any one who tries to get desperate about

the city usually finds that he runs up against the real thing.⁷

It was only in 1948 that Northfield was ready to stage a celebration, "The Jesse James Days," based on the raid. Some people complained about this, arguing that it seemed the event was celebrating a criminal. In response to these concerns, the event's name had to be changed, first to "Fall Festival" and finally to "Defeat of Jesse James Days."

Northfield's emphasis on the defeat of Jesse James springs from, and expresses, the kind of psychological concerns I have outlined. It also highlights, since it presents Jesse as a bandit, the contentiousness of the image of this character. Other communities in the U.S.A. celebrate Jesse James as some kind of Robin Hood who robbed the rich and gave to the poor.⁸ There are well known ballads which present Jesse James as a good outlaw.⁹

The Jesse James tradition has, thus, broad socio-political ramifications on the American scene. It is, at least in some ballads, a discourse reflecting consciousness of class oppression. Jesse, as many scholars have pointed out, is presented as a person who fought against the railways and the banks, which were seen as oppressive.

In this respect, however, Jesse James's relationship to the Northfield bank turns out to be problematical. As a *Northfield News* publication says:

Northfielders have a somewhat different view of Jesse James. The First National Bank here was not a hated financial institution; it was the repository of the life savings of hard-working pioneers, merchants and farmers. The acting cashier, entrusted with those funds—while the heads of the bank were off enjoying the exposition in Philadelphia marking the nation's centennial—felt strongly his obligation to his friends in the community.¹⁰

This disclaimer is only one indication of the controversies surrounding the legacy of Jesse James in Northfield. Even during the reenactments, the people in charge of the celebrations keep reminding the spectators that the celebration is not to honor the bandits but Joseph Lee Heywood. The reminder itself is significant, for it suggests conflicting viewpoints about the gang.

Jesse James shares many of the essential qualities of a trickster figure. He is not only enigmatic, but cunning and elusive. He carried out his exploits and eluded capture not only by force, but by deception.

There are people who have stated that Jesse James is only one of this

gangster's names. This means that Jesse James may have not done some of the things he is said to have done, or that he may have done more things than he is reputed to have done. Ever since the raid on Northfield, there has been a debate about whether Jesse James ever came to Northfield in the first place. It appears nobody knows for sure; it's simply assumed that one of the robbers who escaped and eluded the pursuing Minnesotans was Jesse James. One recent article noted:

Turning up doing research in the Pye Room of the Northfield Public Library last Wednesday (Crazy Day) was a Mr. Whitney from Park Ridge, Ill., who does not believe Jesse James was here in 1876.

In fact, he doesn't think James was anywhere he was supposed to be in those years; he thinks he was in prison. He believes that Tom Howard was not an alias for James, but a completely different person who lived with James' wife and family and carried out his other usual pursuits—and was killed. He thinks that James lived until the 1930s.¹¹

There is also a controversy over why Jesse embarked on his career of crime. Some say he did so to avenge wrongs done to his family. What these wrongs were is also controversial. One report about why Jesse and Frank James became outlaws notes:

It is said that their first determined oath to live their days out as terrors was when their old father was taken from home by some of Tennon's gang and hung up to a tree where he was soundly thrashed until his pious limbs danced a hornpipe between heaven and earth.¹²

Equally controversial is the question of why the gang came to Northfield. Several popular reasons are now commonly cited. It is said, for example:

Bill Stiles, one of the gang, was a former resident of Rice county, and knew that at Northfield the First National Bank was a prosperous institution.

It is also thought that the raiders may have known of the presence in Northfield of General Adelbert Ames, former carpetbagger governor of Mississippi, and may have thought that his father-in-law Civil War Union General Butler—despised in the South—had funds in the Northfield bank.¹³

THE FIVE CENT

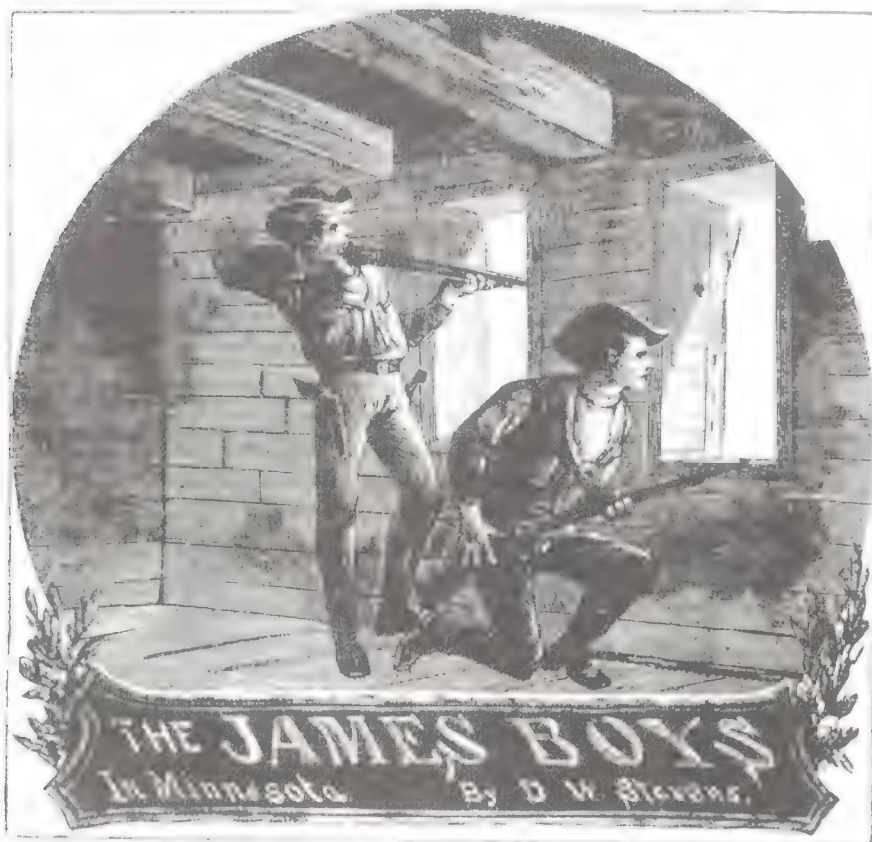
WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY

No. 479.

March 8, 1882.

PRICE
TEN CENTS.

Vol. I



"The James Boys in Minnesota," *Wide Awake Library*, no. 479, March 8, 1882, by Missouri-born John R. Musick (1848/49-1901) writing as D. W. Stevens. The outlaw was shot and killed by Bob Ford four weeks after the date of this dime novel, on April 3, 1882.

A different account was published in the *Northfield News*, based on reports published elsewhere, including the *New York American*:

The gang had in rapid succession spread terror and death in Kentucky, California and Arkansas. Numerous detectives were on their trail and a posse of Pinkertons raided the home of Mrs. Reuben Samuels, the mother of the James brothers, and hurled a bomb through the window. The brothers were not at home but the bomb killed Archie, the eight-year-old son of Mrs. Samuels, and tore off that lady's arm. Says the *American*:

"A lawyer who lived in Liberty, the town in which Mrs. Samuels lived and where the bomb accident occurred, learned that he was to pay with his life for leading the bomb throwing detectives. He moved to Northfield, Minn. This led to the famous Northfield raid".¹⁴

There are several issues that emerge in looking at the folkloristic significance of the Jesse James tradition in Northfield. It seems, first, that the crowds that come to watch the reenactment of the raid may not all be there to remember the heroic bank clerk. They may be more interested in the excitement of watching the gangsters on horseback, shooting their way through town. The image of someone on horseback is very much a part of the heroic imagination in America. It evokes the heroism of the wild west. Barbara Allen makes this point in "The Heroic Ride in Western Popular Historical Tradition."¹⁵ It is difficult to deny that the popularity of the Defeat of Jesse James Days has some connection with this trait in American culture.

The image of the hero on horseback is found in the epic traditions of far flung societies, separated in time and space: from the ancient Greeks to the ancient Arabs and the ancient Mali empire of West Africa. The notion of chivalry, which was widespread in Europe, is based on the idea of a hero on horseback. In many parts of Central Asia and the Balkans the phenomenon is also widespread. Scholars have even suggested that in these traditions, the horse is the hero's alter ego.¹⁶

In the course of the interviews in Northfield, we learned that there are still people of Northfield who do not like the Defeat of Jesse James Days, and they want to be out of town on those days. Some people told us that the thousands that converge on the city are outsiders. Some told us that they do not go to see the celebration although they live in this city. In short, there are still misgivings

about what actually is being celebrated and maybe embarrassment that people end up seeing the heroism of the gangsters on horseback anyway, despite the reminders that the events are to celebrate the bank clerk.

As I have noted, economic realities have played a part in the growth of the Jesse James tradition. In some parts of the United States, Jesse James is presented as a Robin Hood who stole from the rich to give to the poor. Such an image expresses class contradictions among the haves and the have-nots. It also expresses relations between the powerful and the powerless. From the point of view of the authorities, namely the sheriffs, the financial institutions and the railways, people like Jesse James were nothing but criminals. It is thus fair to note that the legend of Jesse James projects class interests. We see this pattern in various parts of the world: from the Robin Hood tradition of England to the Tamil traditions of India.¹⁷

The problem, as I have noted, is that in Northfield people say that the bank was not a hated institution. The people who had their money there, or the people who worked there, probably would not see the bank as a hated institution. This argument applies to all the banks that Jesse James robbed. But does this really undercut the argument that the banks were hated institutions? Does it mean that the interests of the banker and the interests of the ordinary people coincided? Could it be that this positive view of the banks is merely a form of bourgeois ideology? These questions need further study.

However, that the Jesse James tradition expresses the anxieties of people in a capitalistic economy can hardly be doubted. People worry about the safety of their money. Stories of bank robberies express these anxieties. In any case, the money theme is a central part of the American tradition. Even the heroic ride stories sometimes incorporate this theme. Allen reports on one such story:

Cattle buyer Jules (or Louis) Rennie learns that the San Francisco bank in which he has deposited his life savings has failed. He undertakes a 700-mile ride from Sacramento to Portland to beat the steamer carrying the news in order to withdraw his money from the Portland branch. He makes the trip in six days.¹⁸

As the Jesse James tradition has evolved over the years it has incorporated universal folkloric motifs, such as reconnaissance, rescue, escape, obstacle flight, deception, disguise, and supernatural helpers. One of the most interesting anecdotes we came across during our research was that, during his escape from Northfield, Jesse James put the horseshoes on his horse backwards, to deceive

the pursuers. This highlights the trickster element I have mentioned.

Again, as is typical of folklore, the Jesse James tradition exists in different versions. Many little stories have grown up around the main story, even in Northfield. Family histories have been attached to the Jesse James story in various ways. Many people have claimed to be Jesse James, or at least to be related to him. One of the reasons his relatives wrote about him was to establish the extent of his family, in order to keep out people who were claiming to be related to Jesse James.

Legends have grown up around the places Jesse James is supposed to have visited or passed through. In Northfield, there is the story of the bullet holes in the wall of the First National Bank. This is the tradition that there were bullet holes in the wall long after the raid, and people used to come demanding to see the holes. Incidentally, I have realized that the bullet hole motif is widespread in American folklore, not just in the Jesse James tradition.

The Jesse James tradition in Northfield has complex relationships to the American experience, harking back to the Civil War. It is a discourse through which various social and psychological realities are mediated. The impact of the tradition extends across the world, spread mostly through films and dime novels. It is said, for example, that some violent South African gangsters were known as Jesse James.¹⁹ And in a poll conducted in Europe to determine who the Europeans thought were the most famous Americans who ever lived, the prominent Americans were not Abraham Lincoln or George Washington, but number one was Mark Twain, number two was Jesse James, and number three, Mickey Mouse.²⁰

Notes

This is a revised version of a paper presented at the 23rd Meeting of the Popular Culture Association, which was also the 15th Meeting of the American Culture Association, April, 7-10, 1993, in New Orleans, Louisiana. I wish to thank the Blandin Foundation for a generous grant that made it possible to do research in Northfield in the Summer, 1992. I also wish to acknowledge the cooperation of Catherine Skramstad and Bjorn Kindem on that project. Thanks to St. Olaf College, especially to Bob Phelps and Lydia Quanbeck of the Office of Government and Foundation Relations, St. Olaf Librarian Kirk Moll and the many colleagues who offered advice and moral support. Many thanks to the people of Northfield who welcomed us and shared their stories with us.

1. George Huntington, *Robber and Hero*. Northfield: Christian Way Company, 1895.

2. See, for example, "Northfield—Waterloo of the James Gang," *The Milwaukee Journal*, July 24, 1974.
3. *The Northfield Bank Raid, September 7, 1876*. Northfield: Northfield News, 1980 (first printed 1933).
4. "No Jesse James Goes: Our People have seen the Real Article and Want no More." *Northfield News*, Nov. 22, 1902, 1.
5. "No Jesse James Goes," 1.
6. The story of this visit was first reported in the *St. Peter Herald*, and then featured under the title "Daughter of Frank James of Bank Raid Fame A Visitor," in the *Northfield News*, July 10, 1941, 1.
7. "Tales of Town and Country," *Northfield News*, Nov. 8, 1902, p. 8.
8. See, for example, Kent L. Steckmesser, "Robin Hood and the American Outlaw," *Journal of American Folklore*, 79 (1966), 345-354.
9. See, for example, Polly Stevens Fields, "'And Laid Poor Jesse in his Grave:' A Study of Selected Ballads About Jesse James," *The Mississippi Folklore Register*, 22, 1&2 (1988), 33-45.
10. "James gang defeat not dead history," in *Defeat of the Jesse James Gang in the Northfield Bank Raid*, ed. Maggie Lee (Northfield: Northfield News, Minn., August 1981), 2.
11. "Researcher Thinks James Wasn't Here," *Northfield News*, July 30, 1981.
12. *Rice County Journal*, October 6, 1881. [page not known]
13. *The Northfield Bank Raid*, 6.
14. "Epic of Outlawry," *Northfield News*, March 5, 1915, 2.
15. Barbara Allen, "The Heroic Ride in Western Popular Historical Tradition," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 19 (1988), 397-412.
16. See Albert Lord, *Epic Singers and Oral Tradition*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991.
17. See Joseph L. Mbele, "The Hero in the African Epic," *Africana Journal*, 13, 1-4 (1982), 124-141.
18. "The Heroic Ride," 400-401.
19. Clive Glaser, "The Mark of Zorro: Sexuality and Gender Relations in the Subculture on the Witwatersrand," *African Studies*, 51, 1 (1992), 48.
20. "James gang defeat," 2.

CONFERENCE REPORT:

Pulpccon 25

Richard Bleiler
University of Connecticut

The 1996 Pulpccon 25 was held at San Jose State University, California, from August 1 through August 4. The Guests of Honor were Western writer D. B. Newton and Forrest J. Ackerman, noted collector of science fiction memorabilia and the publisher of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. A Special Guest of Honor was Ed Kessell, a founder of Pulpccon who had dropped out after last attending Pulpccon 3.

This was the first time the Pulpccon had been held in the West, and attendance was low, with somewhere between 115 and 125 paid memberships. It was also a Pulpccon marred by persistent problems with the facilities of San Jose State University. Numerous guests arrived having paid for a dormitory room along with their membership, only to learn that the University had not reserved rooms for them and that they had to stay in a motel. In addition, the University had sold access to (cafeteria style) meals in its commons, but it shut the commons on Friday, depriving the Pulpccon guests of their weekend meals. Furthermore, on at least one occasion, the University gave a Pulpccon guest a room but did not maintain records of its doing so and later attempted to give the room to some students.

Small and frustrating though the Pulpccon often was, it had more than the usual interviews and panels. D. B. Newton spoke on Friday night, describing his more than 50 years as a writer of Westerns. Newton's career began with writing stories for the pulps, continued with writing Westerns for television, and concluded with writing original Western novels under his own and numerous additional names, and he provided a witty, lively, and engagingly modest account of his life. Though he did not dwell upon it, Newton was one of the founders of the Western Writers of America and was for many years its secretary/treasurer. Following Newton's speech was a panel/audience discussion of trends in the pulp magazines from their 1896 beginnings until their 1950s demise.

Forrest J. Ackerman spoke on Saturday night, a cheerfully anecdotal account of his life as a memorabilia collector and as a friend to numerous actors, director, and writers. Though pulp magazines were only sporadically mentioned, Ackerman did discuss the first science fiction magazine he saw, a 1926 *Amazing Stories*, and he mentioned owning (and giving away) such rarities as *Zeppelin*

Stories. He was followed by Ed Kessell, who gave a short talk in which he described his role in the establishing of the Pulpccon and expressed delight that it had lasted so long and so well; and following Kessell, the Pulpccon Radio Players presented an adaptation of Robert Sheckley's "Lifeboat Mutiny." The Lamont Award for distinguished contributions to the pulp field was presented to Doug Ellis by last year's winner, John Gunnison.

Special mention should be made of the dealers' room and the auctions. Although a few dealer tables remained empty, some of the rarest pulps known made their appearance in the dealers' room. A mint copy of *Strange Suicides* was noted, as were gloriously beautiful copies of such magazines as *Saucy Movie Tales*, *Stage and Screen Stories*, and numerous "Spicy" magazines, including a perfect copy of the much sought February 1936 *Spicy Mystery Stories*. An estate auction on Friday afternoon featured a mint copy of the April 1926 *Amazing Stories* selling for \$350.00 and a mint copy of *Amazing Stories Annual* selling for \$100.00, and the auction on Friday night was equally lackluster.

Saturday night's auction, however, made up for the indifferent auction of Friday night, for in addition to the usual mass of undistinguished and odd material, this auction featured the first 30 issues of *Weird Tales* in a condition that can only be described as newsstand fresh and utterly pristine. After spirited bidding (and a hearty round of applause upon its conclusion), the first issue of *Weird Tales* sold for \$2,900.00; the second issue sold for \$2,000.00; and prices for the remaining issues averaged in the \$1,100 to \$1,200 range. The May-June-July 1924 special anniversary issue (*Weird Tales* 13) sold for \$1,800.00.

No Winter Pulpccon is planned, and Pulpccon 26 is probably going to be held in Bowling Green, Ohio, at the end of July 1997.

On Sale First and Third Friday

Vol. XXIII

Number 4

October 15

1937

THE
Shadow
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ADVENTURE PARADE

Our Favorite Storytellers Pass in Review

Rocco Musemeche
New Iberia, LA

George Worts Since the age of 15, George F. Worts devoted his time to traveling and writing, a combination that brought him a certain amount of fame and fortune while giving his readers some memorable heroes.

George F. Worts was born in Toledo, Ohio, March 16, 1892. According to Robert Sampson in volume 5 of *Yesterday's Faces*, his study of series characters in the early pulp magazines, Worts died in Hawaii in 1968.

He set sail on the Great Lakes as a dishwasher aboard inland vessels, but soon demonstrated an ability as a wireless radio operator. This skill was transferred to steamships that took him across the South Pacific to Asia and back to Central America. On returning to the United States he spent a year at Columbia University before landing a job as a writer for the Munsey magazines.

Among the jobs listed on Worts' resumé were publisher, editor, drama critic, and deputy sheriff of a county on Florida.

In 1925 he moved to Westport, Connecticut, where he and his wife, Flora, lived at 58 Imperial Avenue. The 10 years he lived in Westport were among his most productive. The blond, blue-eyed writer with the restless and moody personality seemed happiest when he could open an envelope containing a check from his publishers.

Worts' legacy in pulp fiction lies in his three enduring characters: Peter the Brazen, Gillian Hazeltine and Singapore Sammy. The Peter the Brazen stories were published under the pseudonym Loring Brent.

Peter Moore, an American citizen, lives among the intrigues and sinister shadows of Asia (still known, in his day, as "the Far East") Nicknamed "Peter the Brazen" (literally, "the brass man") from his seeming immunity to the wiles of beautiful women, he figures in such classic *Argosy* stories as "The Sapphire Death" and "Kingdom of the Lost" where he eludes the clutches of two of Asia's more prominent malefactors, the "Octopus" and "The Blue Scorpion".

There are actually two series of Peter the Brazen stories. The first appeared in *The Argosy* between October 5, 1918, and December 27, 1919. Part of the six-part 1918 series was published as a book in 1919; the six-part 1919 serial, was not. After a decade, there was a new series, beginning with the February 8, 1930, *Argosy* and concluding with a short story, "Over the Dragon Wall" in the April 6, 1935, issue. That second series is made up of 13 stories, including

7 serials. Some readers find substantial differences between the two series.

Gillian Hazeltine is a lawyer/detective whose courtroom fireworks were appreciated by *Argosy* readers long before Erle Stanley Gardner's Perry Mason came on the scene in 1934 in *The Case of the Velvet Claws*. There are those who are firmly convinced that Worts' lawyer was a major influence on Gardner. Among the many courtroom sparklers and solution-proof stunners in which Hazeltine appeared were "The Grapevine Murders", in which the denouement is saved for the final paragraph, and "The Magpie Murders", whose action takes place outside the courtroom in a country house.

Singapore Sammy, a popular red-headed sailor who scoured Asia looking for, and finding, adventure appeared in several short stories and a couple of novels. His abrupt departure from the pages of *Argosy* was keenly felt by readers who were especially irked when Worts could not give a reason for withdrawing his likable brawler from the magazine.

Among Worts' other stories for the pulps were "The Haunted Yacht Club Murders," "Murder on the High Seas," and "The Decoy." His "The Phantom President," written for *Blue Book Magazine*, was adapted for both the stage and the screen.

When his editors suggested he try a setting other than one with rustling palms, nipa huts and blazing sunlight, Worts responded by writing "Gee, But It's Great to Be a Hero," a tongue-in-cheek western that was a sound success. Every bit as much fun was his delightful "The Son of Madame Butterfly."

[Sources of information for this article include a biographical sketch in a January 1933 issue of Munsey's *Detective Fiction Weekly* and the Westport, Connecticut Public Library; for the best account of the Peter the Brazen stories, see Robert Sampson's "Dragons to the East" in his *Dangerous Horizons*, volume 5 of *Yesterday's Faces*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1991, pages 35-61.]

Nov. 19 Action Stories of All Kinds

ARGOSY

10¢

WEEKLY

Peter the Brazen feels the
**Sting of the Blue
Scorpion**
by Loring Brent



Part One of a five-part serial by
George Worts, writing as Loring Brent,
November 19, 1932

FULMINATIONS

Being Further Comments and Annotations
to the Episodes in the Saga of *Legend*

For Those who Came in Late: This is a continuation of the column in our June issue where we discussed the Science and Inventions of Janos Christoff Bartok, as presented on the *Legend* television show.

Episode Titles and Abbreviations Used Here
Revenge of the Herd (HERD); Knee-High Noon (NOON)

Automated Animals

Thunderhooves. When Ernest Pratt's European publisher Ludwig Hauptman arrives in Sheridan, Colorado, he wants the renowned Nicodemus Legend to guide him on an old-fashioned buffalo hunt, much as Buffalo Bill guided the Grand Duke Alexis in January 1872. Towashie of the neighboring Arapaho is not pleased by this design so Pratt and Prof. Bartok launch a strategy to divert the Europeans from their goal.

Bartok converts the **Wireless Steam-controlled Quadrovelocipede** into a replica of the Arapaho buffalo god "Thunderhooves" by using the stuffed head, Sylvester, from the Buffalo Head Saloon and some buffalo robes. When shots from the hunters damage the remote control receptor on "Thunderhooves", sending the fire breathing mechanical buffalo monster raging out of control and into the town, Pratt has to mount the "buffalo" to gain access to the manual override inside the beast. (HERD)

The nearest equivalents to "Thunderhooves" in the dime novels are some of the inventions of Frank Reade. The original steam man in "Frank Reade and His Steam Man of the Plains; or, The Terror of the West" (*Boys of New York*, 1876; later reprinted in the *Wide Awake Library* and *Frank Reade Library*) was succeeded by the great automated animal of "Frank Reade and His Steam Horse" (*Boys of New York*, 1876; reprinted in *Wide Awake Library* and *Frank Reade Library*). While not propelled by remote controls, the horse is certainly related to "Thunderhooves" in that each imitates nature while utilizing the latest scientific imagination.

Frank Reade, Jr. made an improvement on his father's steam horse in which the horse was constructed of plates of steel. The body of the horse contained a furnace and boiler with the steam-chest in the neck and the cylinders fastened

to the shaft on each side. Driving-rods were connected with armatures and mechanical joints in the front legs causing these to act upon themselves in such a manner as to give the muscular play and action necessary to make the horse's gait. The horse was driven by means of the reins connected to the throttle valve.

The Trojan Cow is a Bartok device that seems to have no direct parallel in the dime novels, however. Simply put, this is an imitation cow, large enough to conceal two people inside, one at the head, the other at the rear end. The horns and a portion of the top of the head can be raised by the person at the front end to serve as a periscope for observation. It is propelled by means of pedals and wheels, much like a tandem bicycle.

The Trojan Cow is stationed in the midst of a herd in danger of being rustled in order to take the rustlers by surprise. As the would-be rustlers approach, the appropriate **Bartok Non-Violent Perpetrator Control Device** may then be launched through the mouth of the cow and the thief trapped in its net (literally). This invention may have been a replacement for the less successful **cow bell tracking device**; with this, electronic equipment attached to a bell on an individual steer in the herd allowed Bartok and his associate Huitzilopochtli Ramos to track anyone who attempted to make off with the animal. As demonstrated in the episode, it has less than satisfactory results when someone transferred the bell to a donkey and placed that animal in Ernest Pratt's hotel room.

Bartok felt that in the Trojan Cow lay the future of rustler surveillance. It also supported his theory about the value of camouflage—"to be here without appearing to be here." Work on this invention replaced, at least for a time, his electric light research. (NOON)

Sam Sherman, Ipswich, MA
J. Randolph Cox, Northfield, MN

LEGEND



Recent books in review, or forthcoming publications noted

MORE FROM THE PULP PAST

Howard Wandrei. *Time Burial: The Collected Fantasy Tales of Howard Wandrei*. Edited and Introduced by D. H. Olson. Minneapolis: Fedogan & Bremer, 1996. ISBN 1-878252-22-4 \$29.00.

Readers of fine fantasy, science fiction, and horror fiction have been waiting for this book for nearly a quarter of a century. This collection was advertised by another publisher in 1972 as forthcoming; the wait has been worthwhile. The work of Howard Wandrei (1909-1956) has never been collected before and has been increasingly difficult to find. Principally drawn from pulp magazines of the 1930s, this volume contains examples of Wandrei's earliest publications as well as those of the mature writer. The discerning reader can trace the development of the popular artist in fiction in the twenty stories collected here.

D. H. Olson's excellent introduction draws on unpublished diaries, journals, and correspondence to present a portrait of the Minnesota pulp writer as both talented and troubled. Illustrated with photographs and artwork by the author. Highly recommended for anyone who has a serious interest in fantasy fiction.

jrc

Don Hutchison. *The Great Pulp Heroes*. Oakville, ONT & Buffalo, NY: Mosaic Press, 1996. Illus. 276p. ISBN 0-88962-585-9 (paperbound) \$14.95.

Although one of the concluding chapters discusses some of the more notable pulp villains, the majority of *The Great Pulp Heroes* is a chatty and affectionate survey of the major pulp heroes, often those who were the lead characters in the hero pulps. This is not an original subject—Robert Sampson devoted nine books to tracing the development of chains of ideas through the pulp magazine, and other significant authors in this area include Will Murray and Ron Goulart—but Hutchison handles his material with some aplomb, the fourteen chapters of his book providing descriptions of the lives and adventures of such heroic characters as The Shadow, Doc Savage, G-8, The Spider, the Black Bat, Captain Future, The Avenger, Operator #5, Bill Barnes, and Tarzan, to name but a few. These chapters are enjoyable, and those who know nothing about the thrill of the series hero character will find them a useful and engaging introduction to the subject.

This, however, is not to say that *The Great Pulp Heroes* is perfect, for it has

some unfortunate shortcomings. First and foremost, Hutchison has not documented any of his quotations or sources, and on at least one significant occasion he has apparently misattributed and misquoted the original source. Late in his life, Lester Dent is reputed to have (somewhat bemusedly) told a reporter that Doc Savage "has the clue-following ability of Sherlock Holmes, the muscular tree-swinging ability of Tarzan, the scientific sleuthing of Craig Kennedy, and the morals of Jesus Christ." In *The Great Pulp Heroes*, the statement is attributed to Bill Ralston and John Nanovic, as being their editorial conception of the character. Furthermore, Doc Savage's abilities are given here as: "the clue-following ability of Sherlock Holmes, the muscular tree-swinging ability of Tarzan, and the scientific sleuthing of Craig Kennedy [p. 36]," with Hutchison adding that "they did not add, but could have, that he should have the morals of a saint." Which is it? The statement does not appear to be given in Ralston and Nanovic's "Doc Savage, Supreme Adventurer," reprinted in Marilyn Cannaday's *Bigger Than Life: The Creator of Doc Savage* (Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1990), but it might have been published in an additional venue. A single footnote would have resolved the question.

Questions of attributions and quotations aside, the overall balance of *The Great Pulp Heroes* can also be criticized, for Hutchison has examined primarily the hero pulps, those that featured a single hero engaged in semi-fantastic combat and adventures. This means that the western pulp heroes have been given short shrift, there being no mention of such notable and enduring characters as Max Brand's Destry and Mulford's Hopalong Cassidy. Similarly, the major adventure pulp heroes (i.e., Mundy's Jim Grim and Tros) and the major weird heroes (i.e., Howard's Conan and Moore's Northwest Smith and Jirel Joiry) are not mentioned. Considering the strengths that the author demonstrates, one hopes that Hutchison will examine them in subsequent volumes and that these volumes will have indexes.

Richard Bleiler

PULP REPRINTS

Behind the Mask, No.36 (Spring 1996). Tom and Ginger Johnson, 504 E. Morris Street, Seymour, TX 76380. \$5.50 and issue; \$22.00 four issues (includes postage).

Facsimile reprints of "Out of the Picture," by Laurence Donovan from *Open Road for Boys*,¹ March 1930; "The Green Ghost," by [Celia Keegan]² from *Five Novels Monthly*, December 1931; "The Domino Lady's Double," by Lars

Anderson, from *Mystery Adventure*, November 1936; "The Pied Piper of Frisco," by John K. Butler, from *Dime Detective*, November 1937.

1. Not a pulp; a magazine meant for boy readers. 2. Author's name lacking on this issue of *BTM*, supplied here.

Ed Lauterbach

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS RECEIVED

Burroughs Bulletin, no. 26, Spring 1996 [Published quarterly for members of the (Edgar Rice) Burroughs Bibliophiles; focus on *Tarzan the Unnamed*; Glenn Morris (actor in *Tarzan's Revenge*, 1938); Burne Hogarth (artist for the *Tarzan* comic strip); a preview of the new television series *Tarzan: The Epic Adventures*.] George McWhorter, Curator, The Burroughs Memorial Collection, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292. \$28 per year.

ECHOES, Vol. 15, no. 4 (August 1996) Whole number 88 [For pulp magazine collectors] "The Poor Man's Detective-Hero Pulp", by Shawn Danowski (a survey of some of the stories in *Nick Carter Magazine*); "The Saga of the Masked Rider," by Nick Carr continued; Burt Leake on the "Dusty Ayres and His Battle Birds" pulps; John Edwards' capital survey of the stories of Dan Fowler, Ace of the G Men; an overview by Jeffrey Zverloff of the weapons in The Avenger series; somewhat unrelated to the pure pulp magazine theme is the synopsis by Steve Mitchell of *The Green Hornet* movie serial. Fading Shadows, Inc. 504 E. Morris Street, Seymour, TX 76380. \$4.50 per issue, 3 issues for \$13.50, 6 issues for \$26. Bi-monthly with extra issue at Pulpcon time.

High Adventure. [Facsimile editions of pulp magazine fiction from the past] No. 28 (July 1996) *The Wings of Satan*, by Robert J. Hogan, reprinted from *G-8 and His Battle Aces*, May 1936 [Note: pages 35 and 36 are out of order in this issue and should be reversed for the correct reading of Chapter Six]. No. 29 (Sept 1996) *All Western Number*. An anthology of stories reprinted from pulp magazines from 1932 to 1956. "Fourth Floor Front," by Hugh B. Cave (*Outlaws of the West*, March-April 1932); "The Devil's Ear," by Lester Dent (*Western Trails*, November 1932); "One-Man Posse," by Max Brand (*Mavericks*, September 1934); "Law of the Hunted Ones," by Elmore Leonard (*Western Story Magazine*, December 1952); "Aces Always Win," by Michael Avallone (*Western Action*, May 1956). Adventure House, 914 Laredo Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901. \$6.00 per issue, \$1.25 postage.

Newsboy, Vol. 34, no. 3 (May-June 1996) [For collectors of Horatio Alger and other juvenile series authors] Convention issue highlights the annual HAS convention in Stratford, Ontario; Peter Walther's series of "Bibliographic Rambles" continues with "W. O. Stoddard and the Moving Picture"; "The Holy Grail: Fifteen Minutes with the

Stratemeyer Syndicate Archives" by Jack Dizer. Edited by William R. Gowen, 923 South Lake Street, Apt. 6, Mundelein, IL 60060. Executive Secretary, Robert E. Kasper, 585 E. St. Andrews Drive, Media, PA 19063. \$20 per year, which includes membership in the Horatio Alger Society.

Martha's KidLit Newsletter, Vol. 8, no. 6 & 7 (June & July 1996) [For collectors of Out of Print Childrens' Books] In June: "W. W. Denslow: The Other Wizard of Oz", by Walter Albert; obituary for illustrator Garth Williams; Selected Bibliography of Works by Robert Lawson. In July: "Movable Books Society April Conference" and "Eleanor Estes—Herstory 1906-1988." Martha Rasmussen, Box 1488, Ames, IA 50014. Monthly publication. \$30 per year.

Mystery & Adventure Series Review. No. 29 (Summer 1996) A reprint of material from the Nancy Drew issue (*M&AR* no. 7) with new correspondence columns and advertising. Published irregularly by Fred Woodworth, P. O. Box 3488, Tucson, AZ 85722. \$10 for four issues which will include the current issue, the next one (no. 30), and two back issues. The future of this publication is still uncertain.

Story Paper Collectors' Digest, Vol. 50, nos. 593 594 595 (May, June, and July 1996) [For collectors of British boys' and girls' stories and papers; the British *Dime Novel Round Up* and a publication that can be recommended without reservation!] *C.D.* continues to celebrate its 50th year of publication with reports on new editions of the Billy Bunter stories; a pastiche of Frank Richards; a tribute to artist Terence Cuneo (1907 1996); Bill Lofts on the early years of Charles Hamilton; Bob Whiter on the art of Savile Lumley; Reg Hardinge on a 1912 Sexton Blake story; Margery Woods on the girls of Cliff House School; Ray Hopkins on the Nelson Lee Library; Bill Lofts on Brett Marlowe, the picture strip detective in *Lion*; Laurence price on the *Dr. Who Annuals* featuring the late Jon Pertwee. Editor: Mary Cadogan, 46 Overbury Avenue, Beckenham, Kent BR3 2PY, England. Monthly publication. Write for subscription rates.

Susabella Passengers and Friends, (May, July 1996) [A nostalgia publication for collectors and readers of children's series books] "Models and Gangster" is the theme of the May issue which includes reports on the Las Vegas PCA conference; focus for July is collecting *Oz* books. [Note: the typography and layout of the July issue are very professional; over 60 pages of material as well.] Garrett Knute Lothe, 80 Ocean Pines Lane, Pebble Beach, CA 93953. \$15 per year, bi-monthly.

The Whispered Watchword, Vol. #96-5 (July 1996); Vol. #96-6 (August 1996) [Newsletter of the Society of Phantom Friends] Article in July covers the Sweet Valley High books and tv series; August features dogs in series books; regular features include author interviews and the fun of collecting; reviews of new series books. Kate Emburg, 4100 Cornelia Way, N. Highland, CA 95660. \$26 per year.

Yellowback Library, Numbers 143 through 146 (May through August) [Series Books, Dime Novels, and Related Literature; this is the place to look for dealers who may have those long-wanted books] "Mike Mars, Astronaut," by Robert L. George; Hardy Boys, Tom Swift, Nancy Drew, and Linda Craig Wanderer editions by Paul Mular; further speculation on the location of Bayport; the books of Howard Pease; Gil O'Gara, P. O. Box 36172, Des Moines, IA 50315. \$30 per year, \$15 for six months.

Sam Sherman. "Looking at Life in the Dimes," *MassBay Antiques*, Vol. 17, no. 3 (June 1996) 3, 45. This is one of the best general articles about dime novels we have seen in a long time. Includes an interview with Eddie LeBlanc and some quotations from your editor.

LETTERS

What an excellent issue of *Dime Novel Round-Up* August is to subscribers and folks just wanting to recall Stratemeyer.

Wrote a paper on PeeWee Harris for the San Antonio conference while trying to dispel periods of depression the month or so following open heart surgery. This, by the way, was the therapy needed to chase the blues back to wherever they came from. At the same time Didi Johnson's two books on Stratemeyer played a great part in the mind healing, so much so that the Robert W. Finnan letter to the editor on what he calls "a puff piece" review does not even merit a toss in the waste basket. Those two books of hers played a great part in getting me on my feet again.

Rocco Musemeche
New Iberia, LA

My colleague, John Ernest, suggested that I write to you with a query. I am presently working on a book-length study of Shakespeare in popular culture. This study is concerned with allusions to and adaptations of Shakespearean drama in popular culture forms (like the dime novel). I am presently building a checklist of materials that adapt Shakespearean plots or characters, or materials that allude in extended ways to Shakespeare's plays. Would you or your readers know of any such materials in dime novels? If so, I would be deeply grateful to be in contact with them. I would also be interested in knowing of any indexes to plots or characters of dime novels.

Douglas Lanier
University of New Hampshire
Durham, NH

Can anyone assist Mr. Lanier? He can be reached at the department of English, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824; his telephone is (603) 862-3796; email: DML3@christa.unh.edu. Our own knowledge of this area is uncertain, but the forthcoming *Dime Novel Companion* may someday be helpful since we will include character sketches to the major series characters as well as plot synopses of selected key dime novels.

Just a footnote to the "Uncollected Merriwell" piece (*DNRU*, Vol. 64, no. 4, August 1995). While the Patten-authored Merriwell stories and Merriwell stories by others continued to see print into 1930, the use of the Burt Standish name continued through July 1939 in *Sport Story Magazine*.

A number of Street & Smith's *Sport Story Magazine* writers used the Burt Standish name. These included Arthur Mann, Jackson Scholz, Robert Bryan and Dabney Horton—all *Sport Story Magazine* regular contributors. Bryan had two baseball stories in the 1939 2nd January and 1st April issues and a four-part baseball story which extended from the 2nd May issue through the 1st July issue (this was the last use of the Standish name). Dabney Horton used the name in the 1st April issue. *Sport Story* survived into 1943 when the last issue was published in July.

Street & Smith published a magazine called *Athlete* that was almost identical in style and content. No use was made of the Standish name in its brief publication history (August 1939-April 1940).

John Dinan
Topsfield, MA

For those who may be unfamiliar with the publishing sequence of some of the Street & Smith magazines, many were issued twice a month. The issues were numbered as the 1st or 2nd issue of the given month.

On page 123 of the August number, John T. Dizer describes the find (at the New York Public Library) of "a scrap book of material related to Horatio Alger ... [which] contained clippings from the early 1850s of material signed by Alger and 'Carl Cantab.'"

At the risk of telling your readers something they already figured out for themselves, I suggest that the name in quotes refers to someone named Charles who spent some time at Harvard. Why Harvard? Because, if I'm not far off base, the "Cantab." refers to Cambridge, Massachusetts—not the Latin "Cantabrigiensis" used in England to refer to Cambridge University.

In any case, Horatio Alger Buffs (I don't claim membership in that elite group) may be interested to hear of an elegiac poem about Harvard which Alger

contributed to the *New York Weekly* not long after he first began writing for that journal. I happened on it while searching for material on Ned Buntline and Buffalo Bill Cody.

Robert D. Pepper
Palo Alto, CA

"Carl Cantab" was, of course, an early pseudonym used by Horatio Alger.

Thanks for including my notes in the August *DNRU*. Have read the issue over and over. Fascinating stuff. All your hard work is appreciated.

John Enright
San Jose, CA

The latest *DNRU* was fascinating and enjoyable. It is frustrating to know that a treasure-trove of information [like the Stratemeyer Syndicate Records] exists, but is inaccessible. Hope someone comes up with the money for cataloging the material.

Other than reading all the then-existent Hardy Boys books at age 11 or so, my only brush with the Syndicate came when I shared an elevator with Harriet Adams on our way to that MWA Edgar dinner when she was given an award.

Robert Briney
Salem, MA

Bob's reference is to the 1980 Mystery Writers of America dinner when Harriet Adams received a Special Edgar Allan Poe award. This is always in the form of a bust of Poe.

NOTES & QUERIES

How I Started Collecting and Research. Bill Lofts writes from London in response to our request for material on how our readers began collecting and studying our particular area of popular culture.

I suppose, with due modesty, I could claim to have had the most unusual start to our hobby. This happened out in the jungles of Burma around late 1943.

I had then not the slightest interest in Old Boys Papers and Comics (as they are called in England) then, having packed them up about the age of 15 completely, and gone on to more adult things. I had joined the British Army at 18, being trained for Jungle fighting out East, as well as on secret missions behind enemy lines. On a mission one day, our patrol came across a clearing

where stood about a dozen bamboo disused huts, previously occupied by the Japanese. In one of them I found a paperback detective story novel entitled *The Sexton Blake Library*. Glancing through it, I saw it was about a private detective of that name who, like the immortal Sherlock Holmes, lived at Baker Street, London, a place only about ten minutes away from where I lived. I put it in my large, bottle-green jungle trouser pocket and thought it would be interesting to read when I had the opportunity. I found the story quite enjoyable and decided I would look out for any back issues in the series when I was back in civilisation once more.

On returning to England, I found that this booklet series was still being issued twice monthly. As I could read very quickly, this frequency was not sufficient for my needs, so I sought back issues in the London street markets. Later on I discovered that there were others like me with similar tastes. Some belonged to Clubs and subscribed to various collecting magazines. Everything snowballed and eventually I became an expert on all aspects of English juvenile literature.

I have written books, about 200 magazine articles, produced catalogues, indexes, been elected president of various clubs. I became an investigator in real life, was consulted by universities, publishing firms, and even helped some famous authors with aspects of their works. One of these was Leslie Charteris, creator of *The Saint*, who became a personal friend.

In answer to the frequent query whether Sexton Blake is still my favourite, the answer is, unfortunately, no. As time went on I found the tales had their limitations as crime stories meant for a juvenile and teenage readership.

Still, all this I have accomplished would not have happened if I had not found that paperback out in the wilds of Burma some thousands of miles from home!

Dime Novels and Bookstores. Ron Blum of Kayo Books, 814 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94109, has acquired extensive runs of *Tip Top Weekly*, *Liberty Boys of '76*, *Secret Service*, *Brave and Bold*, as well as a copy of Johanssen's *The House of Beadle and Adams* (2 vols.). If you have any interest, drop him a note or call him at (415) 749-0554. (Email: kayo@sfo.com)

Dime Novel Sketches series by Edward T. LeBlanc

Cover illustration from the collection of Edward T. LeBlanc